

Heatherbrook Primary School

Astill Lodge Road, Beaumont Leys, Leicester LE4 1BE

Inspection dates

27–28 April 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The strong leadership of the new headteacher has brought about recent improvements, but there is still work to do for the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes to be consistently good across the school.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not cover all aspects of the school's work.
- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because pupils in key stage 2 are not making good enough progress.
- The quality of teaching across the school is not consistently good. There is effective practice in many classes, but this is not shared across all year groups well enough.
- In some classes, teachers are not using assessments of pupils' learning well enough. They do not make sure that work is at the right level of difficulty for pupils' abilities. Consequently, some pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because teachers are not successfully addressing the low-level disruption in some key stage 2 classes.
- Due to weaknesses in the leadership of the early years, long-term planning for improvements is not effective.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has brought about some important improvements, such as in the quality of teaching and behaviour management, since she took up post.
- Children make a good start to their school life in the early years because teachers plan work that closely matches their abilities and interests.
- Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Phonics is well taught in the early years and key stage 1. As a result, pupils develop strong reading skills.
- Pupils feel safe and they say that behaviour has improved since the new headteacher took up her post.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - plans for improvement cover all aspects of school life so that actions can be coordinated and governors can hold leaders, at all levels, to account rigorously
 - leaders strengthen the leadership of the early years provision in order to improve outcomes for pupils further
 - school leaders are effective in securing improvements in outcomes for pupils in key stage 2
 - teachers are fully held to account for the progress of all groups of pupils in their charge
 - leaders check more thoroughly that pupils' work across all subjects is of a high standard
 - staff have clear guidance on how to use assessment information effectively to improve outcomes for pupils
 - leaders develop a curriculum that engages pupils of all ages and abilities and prepares them well for life in modern Britain
 - the website contains all the details required by government guidelines so that parents can access the information they need.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that outcomes for pupils improve by making sure that:
 - the effective practice seen in some lessons is shared across the school
 - all staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour
 - teachers make good use of assessment information to build on pupils' knowledge and understanding and provide sufficient challenge so that all pupils, especially the most able, can achieve the levels of which they are capable
 - teachers regularly check on the progress pupils are making and intervene quickly when they see that work is too easy or too difficult, to make sure pupils have the appropriate support or challenge to maximise their progress in lessons
 - pupils, especially in key stage 2, are given more opportunities to practise their writing skills, reinforcing their handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar in a wide range of subjects
 - pupils, especially in key stage 2, are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their mathematical skills, particularly in relation to problem-solving and reasoning, in mathematics and other subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders, including governors, have not done enough to improve outcomes for pupils across key stage 2. However, the new headteacher has focused sharply on improving teaching, behaviour and outcomes for pupils this year. She has brought about improvements in all of these aspects but there has not been enough time for this work to have a full impact.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not cover all aspects of school life. This means that long-term improvements cannot be fully coordinated and governors are not able to hold leaders at all levels to account for the work they do.
- The headteacher has managed changes in staffing well this year. Two classes in particular have had several changes of teacher. The headteacher is fully aware of the impact this has had on progress for these pupils. She has put plans in place to secure a more stable staff team for next year.
- The leader with responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs or disability makes sure that the needs of pupils are met well. She enlists the support of external agencies successfully to provide advice and support. She puts in place appropriate interventions for these pupils to support their particular needs. She checks that they are effective and makes changes if there is something more that can be done.
- Middle leaders who have responsibility for English and mathematics have provided staff with some training and have undertaken some monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress across the school. They have a clear view of the strengths and areas for improvement in these subjects. However, there is scope for senior leaders and governors to hold middle leaders to account more rigorously for outcomes of pupils.
- The school's curriculum covers all the requirements of the national curriculum. However, leaders have not made sure that it is engaging and exciting for the pupils of Heatherbrook Primary School. The headteacher is keen to develop the curriculum to match the needs and interests of the pupils who attend the school more closely.
- Pupils have some knowledge of religions and cultures that are different from their own. They are beginning to understand about British values, for example, through voting for the school councillors and understanding school rules. However, these aspects of learning are still in the early stages of development.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding. This is additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders track the progress of these pupils carefully. School assessment information shows that the achievement gaps between many of these pupils and their peers are narrowing.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary sports funding, for example to employ the expertise of a sports coach. Pupils have access to additional sporting opportunities, such as cricket, and teachers are developing their skills in teaching physical education by working alongside the coach.
- Leaders use performance management effectively. They set challenging targets for teachers. They make visits to classrooms, check pupils' books and pupils' progress throughout the year. They provide appropriate training for teachers to improve their skills.
- Leaders have introduced a parent forum where parents can share their views. The headteacher has introduced opportunities for parents to come in to school to celebrate their children's achievements, in assembly for example. The headteacher is keen to do more to involve parents in school life.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn to play the recorder and have visited 'Orchestra Unwrapped' where they listened to a live orchestra in a concert hall. Pupils visit museums, including the British Museum in London, and take part in the Christmas parade in the local community. Pupils say that assemblies teach them about important themes such as resilience.
- Leaders make effective use of alternative providers for a small number of pupils with particular needs. Their effective communication and strong links mean that these pupils' needs are being well met.
- The local authority has supported the school well over recent years. It has provided support and training for leaders and helped them to monitor the progress the school has been making in improving teaching and outcomes.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They meet regularly with leaders, receive and scrutinise reports, and they come in to school to see it in action.

- Governors are very clear about the strengths in teaching and what still needs to be done to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good across the school. They acknowledge that the new headteacher has had an impact on behaviour and teaching across the school over recent months, but that this has not had time to have enough impact on outcomes for pupils in all classes.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils say they feel safe in school. Leaders and governors have undertaken the appropriate training and they make sure that the staff are fully trained so that they know what signs to look for and what to do if they want to raise a concern. Governors attend some training with staff so that they know it is thorough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good because, in some classes, teachers do not make good use of assessment information to ensure that pupils are building on previous learning. This leads to some pupils not being sufficiently supported or challenged to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- In some lessons, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the most-able pupils can achieve and progress for these pupils slows.
- In some lessons, particularly in key stage 2, teachers do not insist on high standards of behaviour from all pupils. Pupils call out or talk when the teacher is talking. Sometimes this goes unchecked by the teacher. When the teacher has to intervene, learning for other pupils is disrupted.
- Pupils' books show that teachers expect high standards of presentation in some classes, but this is not insisted upon in others. They also show that pupils in some key stage 2 classes have limited opportunities to practise their writing and mathematical skills, such as problem-solving and reasoning, across a range of subjects.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers plan learning that matches the abilities of the pupils closely and they intervene to provide further challenge or explanations appropriately for the pupils. This means that pupils of all abilities make progress during the lesson.
- In key stage 1, teachers develop pupils' writing skills well. Teachers use strategies such as 'robot arms' to help pupils to spell words using their phonics (the sounds that letters make) skills and they make sure that the most-able pupils are appropriately challenged. For example, during the inspection, the teacher used her good subject knowledge in grammar and punctuation to enable pupils to improve their writing of newspaper headlines.
- Teaching assistants give effective support to pupils with additional needs so that they are able to access the learning in the classroom alongside their peers. They also support pupils who work in small groups or in one-to-one situations effectively. They use questions skilfully to deepen pupils' understanding. They consider pupils' answers and adapt next steps to meet their needs well.
- Teaching assistants effectively support pupils with a variety of needs across the school, for example in acquiring early spoken English skills or developing reading skills, or by giving individual support to pupils who find it difficult to engage with learning. Pupils enjoy their group work. They recognise that it is helping them to learn and make progress. One pupil explained, 'you come to school to learn'.
- Pupils' books across the school show that the recently introduced marking policy is now implemented more consistently. Pupils say that it helps them to understand what they have done well.
- Phonics is well taught in key stage 1. Teachers build on previous learning successfully and incorporate grammar into phonics lessons to make sure no opportunities are missed to practise key skills.
- Younger pupils use their phonics skills to good effect when they are reading. Older pupils have preferences for particular types of books. Teachers motivate pupils to read at home using a 'reading race track'. Pupils move along the track until they have read 21 books, for which they receive a reward. Pupils say they enjoy this.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement because some older pupils have not developed positive attitudes to learning and they do not take sufficient pride in their work.

- Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to work in pairs or small groups. When they do so, the majority of pupils cooperate well and listen to each other's ideas and views respectfully. Pupils enjoy the chance to work with a range of their classmates.
- Pupils understand about how to keep themselves healthy, including the importance of a balanced diet and exercise. They say that physical education lessons and going swimming with school help to keep them healthy.
- Pupils have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe, for example when they are using the internet. The police and fire service visit the school to talk to pupils about safety. Older pupils enjoy 'Bikeability' where they learn about cycling safely on the roads.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility around school. They help to set up assembly, organise chairs or help other pupils to scrape their plates at lunchtime. Pupils acknowledge that taking responsibility in this way prepares them well for the future. As one pupil said, 'it helps us for when we're older and have a house of our own'.
- Pupils enjoy raising money for charity, for example through bake sales. They say it helps them to 'learn to put other people before yourself'.
- Leaders make sure that pupils have the opportunity, at a level appropriate to their age, to reflect on national and international events, such as Armistice Day and the recent terrorist bombings in Paris. Pupils say that the minute's silence they have 'shows we care'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because occasionally lessons are disturbed by low-level disruption from a small number of pupils.
- The school is generally calm and orderly. Pupils are polite to visitors. Almost all pupils are courteous and listen well in their lessons. However, in some lessons, teachers do not address the few pupils who shout out or continue to talk when the teacher is talking. Pupils recognise that some of their classmates do not make the right choices to behave well.
- At breaktimes and lunchtimes, almost all pupils play together happily. Typically, pupils sit and chat, or play running games. Occasionally, teachers have to intervene when pupils fall out, but they do so effectively.
- Pupils say that bullying has become a rare thing since the new headteacher has been in post. They say this is because pupils know there will be consequences. Pupils are confident that they have someone to talk to who will help them if they have any worries.
- Although attendance has been below national averages in recent years, the headteacher has focused closely on encouraging pupils to come to school. The family support worker engages with parents to promote the importance of good attendance. Pupils say that the headteacher has taught them about how important it is to come to school. As a result, attendance for this year is improving and it is currently broadly in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Published information shows that pupils have not made expected progress in reading, writing or mathematics in key stage 2 over time. However, recent assessment information in school shows that in some key stage 2 classes, pupils are now making better progress.
- Pupils' progress across key stage 2 is inconsistent because the quality of teaching has been variable over time. The headteacher has brought about improvements to the quality of teaching which is beginning to have a positive impact on progress in some classes. However, other classes have had several changes of teacher during this year, which has hindered progress.
- In 2015, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 achieving the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics rose sharply.
- Since the previous inspection, outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 have risen in reading, writing and mathematics. They are now broadly in line with, and sometimes above, national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in reading at key stage 1 rose sharply and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level in writing was in line with the national average. This is a significant improvement on previous years' outcomes.

- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 has risen since the previous inspection. In 2015, it was in line with the national average.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- There is no leader with specific responsibility for the early years. This means that leaders do not closely evaluate the strengths and areas of improvement for the early years. Consequently, focused plans for improvement are not in place.
- Two teachers share the teaching of the Reception class. They have a clear understanding of the particular needs of the children and plan learning activities to match children's abilities and interests.
- The teachers assess the children's knowledge skills and understanding well. Teaching assistants receive training so that they are able to contribute to these assessments. Teachers use this information to plan activities that stretch children's abilities well.
- Teachers successfully involve parents in their children's education. For example, they make home visits and visits to pre-school settings before children start school. Teachers invite parents to share examples of their child's achievements at home. Reception staff share information about the planned learning and write about children's achievements on large paper and boards so that parents can see what their child has been doing that day.
- Children in the Reception class behave well. They cooperate and play well together, for example they help each other to hang the bird feeders that they had made on a tree. They engage with enthusiasm in the many learning opportunities that teachers provide both indoors and outdoors.
- Teachers make close links between learning activities so that learning makes sense to the children. For example, during the inspection, having planted lettuce seeds, the children wanted to learn about how to make a healthy salad. Teachers made sure this learning was available the following day, taking the opportunity to remind children about washing their hands, and developing children's understanding of sequencing events with vocabulary such as 'first', 'then' and 'next'. Children were closely supervised to use a knife, learning to do so sensibly.
- The majority of children start school at Heatherbrook with skills, knowledge and understanding lower than would typically be expected for their age. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years has risen since the last inspection. Children make good progress from their starting points during their year in the Reception class because teaching is effective. Consequently, the majority of children are well placed to start Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	120067
Local authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	10011721

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Royley
Headteacher	Jen Mitchell
Telephone number	0116 235 7721
Website	www.heatherbrook.co.uk
Email address	office@heatherbrook.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 March 2014

Information about this school

- Heatherbrook Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is much higher than average. The pupil premium funding is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The school has links with ARC and Brolay Care Farm for pupils with specific needs.
- The school has close links with Buswells Lodge Primary School for staff professional development.
- The school's website is not compliant with government requirements.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, five governors, leaders with responsibility for English, mathematics and special educational needs or disability, the family support worker, the Reception class teachers, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with two alternative providers that the school uses to meet the needs of some pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents, such as those relating to safeguarding, the school's development plan, and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed an assembly, break and lunchtimes, visited the breakfast club and nurture group, and 16 lessons, several of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and observed them around school, at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and scrutinised pupils' workbooks with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning, considered parents' views through Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and through results of a recent survey that the school has undertaken.
- Inspectors took account of staff and pupils' views through the online survey.

Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector

Richard Waldron

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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